



# Illinois Ethics Matters

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*Honesty, Integrity, Service*

A newsletter from the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies  
of the Illinois Governor

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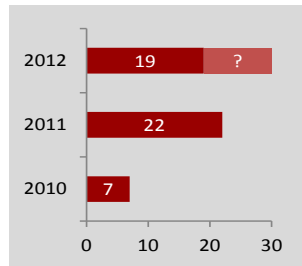
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## Support Continues to Grow for Increased Transparency in State Government

Number of OEIG Reports  
Publicly Released



Under an August 2009 amendment of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, the Executive Ethics Commission, for the first time, was afforded the authority to publicly disclose reports of executive inspectors general in instances where misconduct was found. Prior to the amendment, the findings of executive inspectors general and actions taken by state agencies and state public universities in response to those findings were largely secret. Since then, an increasing number of investigative reports of the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor (OEIG) have been publically released by the Commission.

Below is a summary of OEIG reports released during the past several years:

- FY 2010 - 7 reports were released
- FY 2011 - 22 reports were released
- FY 2012 - 19 reports have been released through March 2, 2012

Other OEIG reports are expected to be disclosed prior to June 30, 2012, the end of the fiscal year.

Legislation is currently under consideration by the General Assembly to increase public disclosure of inspectors general findings and related information and actions. **Illinois House Bill 4066, sponsored by Rep. Fred Crespo**, eases the current restrictions on the publication of founded reports of misconduct. In addition to Rep. Crespo, HB 4066 currently has 4 chief co-sponsors, including Reps. Keith Farnham, Jack Franks, Greg Harris, and Michelle Mussman, as well as 8 other co-sponsors. This bill is also supported by the Chicago Council of Lawyers and the Illinois Press Association.

*"In 2009, the General Assembly took a big step forward in increasing transparency in government when it amended the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to allow investigative reports of the offices of executive inspectors general to be publicly released. However, these changes were not enough because only investigative reports involving employee terminations or suspensions of three or more days must be publicly released..."* - Ricardo Meza, Letter to Daily Herald published February 24, 2012

To make the case regarding the need for increased transparency, the OEIG has held discussions with various stakeholders. The OEIG has also corresponded with or met with numerous members of the General Assembly and to increase public awareness, Executive Inspector General Meza has recently written letters regarding this important issue, which have been published by the Daily Herald and the Chicago Tribune. Please visit our website to view the letters.

As mentioned in a letter published by the Chicago Tribune on February 21, 2012, the Ethics Act was amended several times after it was enacted in 2003. Among the amendments are changes to enable executive inspectors general the authority to accept anonymous complaints and to self-initiate investigations. Additional change is now needed to ensure that more is revealed to the public about the actions of public employees and the actions or inactions of those who employ them when presented with evidence of misconduct, waste, fraud, or abuse. We urge anyone interested in good, honest and transparent government, to support HB 4066.

## Other News

Mr. Meza will take part in a public panel as part of a hearing of the Chicago Ethics Task Force at Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Avenue on Monday, March 12, 2012 beginning at 6:00 pm.